



Our Heritage, Our Stories
Workshop Report

W2: CGDC Producers

National Library of Scotland

“Connecting Community Archives”

23rd April 2024 14:00-16:30

Kelvinhall, Glasgow

Workshop Information

Facilitators

- Dr Abi L Glen, Our Heritage, Our Stories (OHOS), University of Glasgow
- Dr Chris Cassells, National Library of Scotland (NLS)
- Rebecka Rosenberg, OHOS
- Charlie McCann, NLS
- Audrey Wilson, Community Archives and Heritage Group (CAHG)

Speakers

- Professor Marc Alexander, OHOS (Welcome)
- Charlie McCann, NLS (OHOS Case Studies)
- Dr Chris Cassells, NLS (OHOS Case Studies)
- Seonaid MacDonald, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Local Authority Archives)
- Paula Larkin, Govanhill Baths Community Trust (Community Archives)

Community Groups/Archives in Attendance

- Cupar Museum and Heritage Centre, Cupar
- Paisley Heritage, Paisley
- Govanhill Baths Community Trust, Glasgow
- Community Archives and Heritage Group, Scotland-wide
- Glasgow Zine Library, Glasgow
- Lavender Menace Queer Books Archive, Edinburgh
- Stornoway Archives, Isle of Lewis

- Glasgow Buildings Preservation Trust, Glasgow

Number of participants: 19

Number of people taking part: 9

Age Group	No. of Attendees	% of group (approx)
Under 18	0	0
20-30	4	20
30-49	9	50
50+	6	30
Unknown	N/A	0

Number of disabled persons: 2

Is this an estimate or confirmed number? Estimate

Number of attendees from a Black or Minority Ethnic background:2

Is this an estimate or confirmed number? Confirmed

Number of attendees Male/Female/Trans/Other

M: 6

F: 11

Trans: 1

Other: N/A

Is this an estimate or confirmed number? Confirmed

Summary

Connecting Community Archives was designed as an event for archive sector professionals to discuss their engagement and interactions with digital community archives and heritage collections with colleagues and community organisations/practitioners.

The event aimed to share recent experience of collecting, preserving and providing access to community-generated digital archives/collections. By sharing examples and perspectives of

practices, challenges and opportunities from national, local authority and community settings, we aimed to:

- share examples to inform ongoing community archive activity
- understand the different needs and perspectives of organisations and communities
- leave participants with some individual and collective actions to take forward when working with (or in) community archives
- allow input into OHOS white paper recommendations
- forge or build on partnership links across community archives in Scotland

National Library of Scotland, Scottish Council on Archives and Community Archives Heritage Group Scotland delivered the event for the project Our Heritage Our Stories (OHOS), as part of the AHRC funded programme Towards a National Collection.

Workshop Activities

A welcome and introduction to the Our Heritage, Our Stories project was provided by the Project's Co-I, Prof Marc Alexander. This was followed by case studies on two National Library of Scotland's community archive projects led by Charlie McCann and Chris Cassells. The final presentations came from Seonaid MacDonald, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar who discussed the finer points of working with Local Authority Archives, particularly in the Highlands and Islands context. Paula Larkin from the Govanhill Baths Community Trust discussed the complications and benefits of community-led fundraising and awareness-raising in one of Glasgow's most diverse neighbourhoods.

A short break was followed by an in-depth discussion. Contributions from community partners were particularly strong; engaging, thoughtful and fervent. Below are some highlights from the discussion.

- Delegates from the Cupar Museum discussed their status as being part of a Digital Improvement District, and participants discussed the merits and effectiveness of this strategy.
- Delegates from Lavender Menace Queer Books Archive asked about the potential for ethical consumption guidelines to be included in the OHOS white papers, and what this might entail/ how to go about using community expertise to build them.

- Delegates from Glasgow Buildings Preservation Trust raised the possibility of novel ways of collecting community generated digital content (CGDC), perhaps through their own “WikiWalks” (collecting photographs of heritage sites and teaching participants how to upload and tag them on Wikimedia)
- All participants discussed the complications of proprietary systems for cataloguing or storage of their materials.
- Delegates from Paisley Heritage discussed their own way of avoiding the “waiting game” and time involved in putting together traditional funding applications which may be rejected. They have become a ltd company to sell prints, etc, of Paisley to avoid being ‘beholden’ to funders. One noted, “it is surprising how many paywalls there are to accessing our own history”.
- We also note Audrey Wilson’s (CAHG) outstanding contributions, and for facilitating participants from the Highlands and Islands to attend.

After The Workshop

Feedback forms completed by the participants, as well as evaluation conducted on the day by OHOS staff members, produced some quantitative feedback.

50 % of participants felt the workshop enabled people taking part to learn more about CGDC.

60 % of participants felt the workshop encouraged people taking part to learn about OHOS and how it can support them.

20 % of participants felt the workshop enabled people taking part to have new experiences by exploring their collections

100 % of participants felt the workshop encouraged people taking part to share experience, skills and information about their archives/collections

70 % of participants felt the workshop encouraged people to reflect and plan re: the sustainability of their online collections

In addition to connections between the participants that have been made offline, as a direct result of the workshop, CAHG and OHOS have forged the following outputs:

- “Connecting Community Archives” **webinar series**, in conjunction with the Digital Preservation Coalition. A series of webinars for heritage professionals, community archives and community organisers on topics such as funding and the basics of beginning an archive.
- “Connecting Community Archives: **event** to be held at the **Advanced Research Centre, University of Glasgow** on 10/3/25.